

ELECTION OF MEMBER TO COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution (H. Res. 496) and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 496

Resolved, That the following member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE.—Mr. Gillmor, to rank after Mr. Stearns.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON S. 1352, DR. FRANCIS TOWNSEND POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the ordering of the yeas and nays be vacated with respect to the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 1352 to the end that the Chair put the question *de novo*.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1352.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION TO REDUCE TIME FOR ELECTRONIC VOTING DURING CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2641, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, during consideration of H.R. 2641 pursuant to House Resolution 481, the Chair may reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting under clause 6 of rule XVIII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2641, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 481 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2641.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2641) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, with Mr. DAVIS of Alabama in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. VISCLOSKY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Chairman, it is my privilege to submit to the House for its consideration H.R. 2641, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2008.

I want to first thank all the members of the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee for their help in bringing this bill to the floor today. I particularly want to thank my partner and ranking member, Mr. HOBSON of Ohio, for his extraordinary friendship and cooperation this year.

I would parenthetically point out that for the last 8 years, Mr. HOBSON has come to this floor as chairman of an appropriations subcommittee to manage a bill. I am wiser and richer because of the advice and counsel of Mr. HOBSON throughout the development of this bill, and I thank my friend deeply.

This is a truly bipartisan bill that represents a fair and balanced compromise. I believe this is the way our constituents expect Representatives to work together, and I am proud of our bipartisan process. I also want to thank the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. OBEY, and the ranking minority member, Mr. LEWIS, for their support.

And I deeply want to thank all of the staff of the subcommittee, Dixon Butler, Scott Burnison, Terry Tyborowski,

Taunja Berquam, Lori Maes, Kevin Cook, Rob Blair, and Ben Nicholson, for their very hard work on this bill. I want to also thank both Shari Davenport of my office and Kenny Kraft of Mr. HOBSON's office. And I would also acknowledge our agency detailee, Chris Frabotta from the Corps of Engineers, for his assistance in putting this bill and report together. These people form a great team and their work has been invaluable. I would also note for the membership that Chris has served two tours of duty in Iraq as part of the Army Corps of Engineers and Taunja has also served our country in Iraq on one tour also with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Total funding for the Energy and Water Development in fiscal year 2008 is \$31.603 billion. This bill cuts lower priority programs. These spending cuts include 37 programs in weapons under the Department of Energy, totaling \$632 million below the President's request, and 20 other programs, totaling \$280 million below the President's request.

On the other hand, this bill funds the most worthwhile projects and programs at or above the requested level. It reduces some programs that are less valuable or less urgent and redirects funding from previous years that has not been obligated or spent.

All our constituents are in shock at the high price of gas. There is nearly half a billion dollars provided in this bill for research, development, and demonstration efforts in biofuels and vehicle technologies. I would also note that this subcommittee has been working to provide additional funding for this critical area for 3 years, first of all, under the leadership of Mr. HOBSON and, more recently, myself. We are today funding above the President's request for biofuels and vehicle technologies over fiscal year 2006. Together we again increase funding in 2007, and this subcommittee this year made additional investments in vehicle technologies and biofuels for fiscal year 2008. Compared to the President's 2006 request, the subcommittee has worked in a bipartisan fashion to address the energy crisis by increasing funding for these areas by over 100 percent.

These efforts will not bring down the price of gas immediately, but they will help put us on a path to decrease dependence on imported oil and greater fuel efficiency. These are critical steps we must take today.

One of the reasons for our current energy price crisis is the past lack of investment in energy. In fiscal year 2006, adjusted for inflation, government funding for energy research, development, and demonstration had fallen to less than one-quarter of its 1980 levels. In the fiscal year 2007 year-long continuing resolution, Congress began to address this by increasing funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy activities at the Department of Energy by \$300 million. For example, in fiscal year 2006, adjusted for inflation, government funding for conservation R&D